Amendments to the Claims:

In view of the response to the second restriction requirement, new claims 39-44 have been added that recite that the gastrin/CCK receptor ligand is a gastrin and that the EGF receptor ligand is EGF 1-53.

Listing of Claims:

1. (previously presented) A method for treating diabetes mellitus in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

administering to said individual a composition providing a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an EGF receptor ligand in an amount sufficient to effect differentiation of pancreatic islet precursor cells to mature insulin-secreting cells.

2. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein said EGF receptor ligand is an EGF receptor ligand is selected from the group consisting of EGF1-53, EGF1-48, or its EGF1-47 congener of EGF1-48, and an EGF1-49 congener of EGF1-48.

3. (original) The method according to Claim 2, wherein said EGF1-53, EGF1-48, or its EGF1-47 or EGF1-49 congener is human EGF1-53, EGF1-48, or its EGF1-47 or EGF1-49 or its congener.

Claims 4-18. (cancelled)

19. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein said gastrin/CCK receptor ligand is a gastrin.

20. (previously presented) Pancreatic islet precursor cells treated *ex vivo* with a sufficient amount of a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an EGF receptor ligand to induce proliferation of

said pancreatic islet precursor cells into mature insulin-secreting β-cells, whereby an expanded population of said mature insulin-secreting β-cells is obtained.

21. (previously presented) A method for obtaining an expanded population of insulin-secreting pancreatic β-cells, said method comprising:

providing pancreatic islet precursor cells with a sufficient amount of a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an EGF receptor ligand to induce proliferation of said insulin secreting pancreatic β-cells, whereby said insulin-secreting population of pancreatic β-cells is obtained.

22. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 21, wherein said providing is *ex vivo.*

23. (previously presented) A method for treating diabetes mellitus in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

administering to said individual:

a composition providing a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand selected from the group consisting of gastrin and cholecystokinin; and

an EGF receptor ligand selected from the group consisting of EGF1-53, EGF1-48, or its EGF1-47 congener of EGF1-48, and an EGF1-49 congener of EGF1-48;

in an amount sufficient to effect differentiation of pancreatic islet precursor cells to mature insulin-secreting cells.

24. (previously presented) A method for obtaining an expanded population of insulin-secreting pancreatic β-cells *ex vivo*, said method comprising:

providing pancreatic islet precursor cells with a sufficient amount of;

a composition providing a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand selected from the group consisting of gastrin and cholecystokinin; and

an EGF receptor ligand selected from the group consisting of TGF-α, EGF1-53, EGF1-48, or its EGF1-47 congener of EGF1-48, and an EGF1-49 congener of EGF1-48;

whereby said insulin-secreting population of pancreatic β-cells is obtained.

Claims 25-27. (cancelled)

28. (previously presented) The method according to Claims 21 or 24, wherein said precursor cells are obtained from a donor.

29. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 28, wherein said donor is a cadaver.

30. (previously presented) A kit comprising as a first component a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and as a second component an EGF receptor ligand.

31. (previously presented) The kit according to Claim 30 or Claim 38, wherein said components are included in a single container.

32. (previously presented) The kit according to Claim 30 or Claim 38, wherein said components are present as single dosages in said kit.

33. (previously presented) The kit according to any one of Claims 30-32 and 38, wherein said components are concentrates.

34. (previously presented) A kit for use in the treatment of diabetes, comprising: pancreatic islet precursor cells obtained according to the method of Claims 21, 24, or 28.

Claims 35-37. (cancelled)

38. (currently amended) The ~~composition~~ kit according to Claim 30, further comprising as a third component a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

39. (new). A method for treating diabetes mellitus in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

administering to said individual a composition providing a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an EGF receptor ligand in an amount sufficient to effect differentiation of pancreatic islet precursor cells to mature insulin-secreting cells, wherein said gastrin/CCK receptor ligand is a gastrin and said EGF receptor ligand is EGF 1-53.

40. (new) A method for obtaining an expanded population of insulin-secreting pancreatic β-cells, said method comprising:

providing pancreatic islet precursor cells with a sufficient amount of a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an EGF receptor ligand to induce proliferation of said insulin secreting pancreatic β-cells, wherein said gastrin/CCK receptor ligand is a gastrin and said EGF receptor ligand is EGF 1-53, whereby said insulin-secreting population of pancreatic β-cells is obtained.

41. (new) A method for treating diabetes mellitus in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

administering to said individual:

a composition providing a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand, wherein said gastrin/CCK receptor ligand is a gastrin; and

an EGF receptor ligand, wherein said EGF receptor ligand is EGF 1-53;

in an amount sufficient to effect differentiation of pancreatic islet precursor cells to mature insulin-secreting cells.

42. (new) A method for obtaining an expanded population of insulin-secreting pancreatic β-cells *ex vivo*, said method comprising:

providing pancreatic islet precursor cells with a sufficient amount of;

a composition providing a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand, wherein said gastrin/CCK receptor ligand is a gastrin; and

an EGF receptor, wherein said EGF receptor ligand is EGF 1-53;

whereby said insulin-secreting population of pancreatic β-cells is obtained.

43. (new) Pancreatic islet precursor cells treated *ex vivo* with a sufficient amount of a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and an EGF receptor ligand to induce proliferation of said pancreatic islet precursor cells into mature insulin-secreting β-cells, whereby an expanded population of said mature insulin-secreting β-cells is obtained, wherein said gastrin/CCK receptor ligand is a gastrin and said EGF receptor ligand is EGF 1-53.

44. (new) A kit comprising as a first component a gastrin/CCK receptor ligand and as a second component an EGF receptor ligand, wherein said gastrin/CCK receptor ligand is a gastrin and said EGF receptor ligand is EGF 1-53.